

Subject: KAZUO YAMAZAKI! and TATSUMI KITAHARA! kick the crap out of each other! ANGEL AZTECA! shows PANTERA DEL RING! how its done! and other stuff I saw.

ALOHA~!

WELCOME TO DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #55!

I couldn't make my self appointed deadline last night because my wife had to write a paper, so I yelled at myself and told me I had better watch my butt around here, or I'll show me the true meaning of tough love. I hate being such a hardass on me but I want me to be more like me, so I gotta lead by example and all. Other than that, I watched the lil punkin for seven hours yesterday and she can eat a whole thing of MacChee and Broccoli. Hmmmmmmmm.... cheesy..... Thus, we watched a big batch of wrestling. WOO-HOO!
@#@@#@#@#@# PROMO AZTECA TV (2/97-3/97)

This was kinda good, kinda bad, depending on the match. Juventud was still in his tailspin during this time period, so you have to look elsewhere on this tape a lot of the time for the coolness. You can find it in varying degrees.

El Tiburon/Skayde/Gitano vs Andy Barrow/Ultimo Guerrerro/Ultimo Rebelde: Tiberon has the neato shark gimmick and he pretty chubbed out and Old School lucha. Skayde has the still-masked Thunderbird-type outfit and is real tiny and moves real well. Andy Barrow and American Gladiator-clad partners are so VERY opening lucha match, Tijuana style. Boy! Talk about cheap heat and no work. The first Caída is pretty cool as Tiberon assists Skayde into the somersault tope. Gitano does a neat headscissors. Don't stray too far from the Fast Forward for the rest of this match.

El Brazo/Super Elektra/Dragon De Oro vs Psicosis/Villano V/ Scandalo: This was pretty cool. Dragon De Oro is pretty nifty in that he is real fast on the mat and flies around inside the ring real well. El Brazo is nothing now and Villano V tries to take him to the mat to show the punks how its done, but Brazo is too fat and lazy now to make it worth the fabulous Villano's while. Super Elektra is smallish and not as highspot intensive as he should be- I mean HELL! he's not gonna whip out the power moves or something. Psicosis beats the crap out of him with his slightly skewwed offense. Scandalo isn't good. No, not at all.

Mascara Sagrada/Lizmark Jr/El Zorro vs Blue Panther/ Villano III/ Zapatista: This is a good one and a keeper. Blue Panther and Mascara Sagrada take it to the mat and you forgive Sagrada for all the zillion of listless performances he had in AAA as he and Blue Panther do a display of bizarro Lucha matwork that makes you remember what you really fall in love with when you fall in love with Lucha Libre (well, you fall in love with the bizarre holds and THEN you fall in love with the rudo hugging the tecnico so's he can slap him upside the head). El Zorro does the world's fastest behind the back-spinning Mexican Armdrags and he has a future in this sport. Zapatista is becoming a real good rudo because he can sell the fastest armdrags and take mind-bending bumps and he has an inkling of offense. I'm wondering if he is the lost, talented

Pandillero. Lizmark and Villano III take it to the mat and all the EMLL matwork that Lizmark Jr learned is lost momentarily as Villano III has to save the young punk's bacon and get him to his feet to avoid further mishaps. The match degenerates the way a lucha match should degenerate some times- foules, highspots and Zapatista beating the crap out of El Zorro, the pretty boy. They make fun of his hair too! I wanna hang out with Zapatista.

Tiburón/Jurasico/Scandalo/Rocky Santana/ Antifaz/nāstuff: This is the match where Tiburón hits the FAT ASS Ciclon Ramirez-level Old School Tope and drives Jurasico's back into the fixed chair and busts him up pretty bad. The rest is pretty uneventful- THANK GOD!

Super Elektra/Angel Azteca/ Vaquera Romo vs Shu El Guerrero/Black Dragon/Pantera Del Ring: Angel Azteca is not afraid to do the two coolest armdrags of the month including the ASS-STOMPING monkey flip into an armdrag and the mid-air redirected armdrag. He and Black Dragon rip it up for second there, which is really cool because Angel Azteca is kinda really old and he does plenty of cool in-ring Lucha stuff, to show the young punks how its done- with grace and verve. Black Dragon hangs with him and flies really well though he is REAL scrawny and seedy looking- which he should use to his advantage more by being more of a punk. Vaquera Romo is pretty good- a sort of Volador Jr even down to the bad blue outfit, though not quite all that yet. He does his job as tecnico because you want SOMEBODY to punch him in the face. Super Elektra doesn't do much in the match but gets beaten on real good- so MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

Vampiro Canadiense/Tarzan Boy/El Zorro vs Cien Caras/Blue Panther/ Pirata Morgan: Hey! Pirata Morgan is a spry old corpse in this one. Not much past that in this though. Vampiro does a neat shootstyle roll-up, but gets stuck with King Worthless, Cien Caras, for much of the proceedings. Less annoying than it sounds, but I don't want to see it again.

Juventud Guerrera/Psicosis/Zapatista vs SuperCalo/Rey Misterio Jr/ Antifaz- Antifaz is the shit! He almost steals the match from the bigger names in the match, but then Rey and Juventud get into it and do a hundred insane highspots which drags Psicosis into the fray, leaving the game Antifaz in their crazed wake. Antifaz is thicker and more prone to powermoves, which is cool in this beautiful setting. Guerrera, Rey and Psicosis decide to get into intricate-ending-mode to further the magnificence of the match. Antifaz and Zapatista seem to be natural rivals and I wonder what has happened since March.

Konnan/LaParka/El Zorro vs Cien Caras/Blue Panther/Pirata Morgan: Hey! Pirata Morgan is a spry old corpse in this one too! He and LaParka do some cool sections and Blue Panther schools El Zorro, which is neat. They beat the crap out of Zorro at the end, which ya gotta love.

Mini Elektra/Bracito de Plata vs Payasitos II y III: Midget Clowns that wrestle! JEEZUSS! And Super Elektra should do more and be cooler before they go and give him a mini. YIPES!

Salsero/Ninja de Fuego/Skayde vs Nygma/Jurasico/Scandalo- HEY! UNDERCARD! Skandalo isn't good. Nope. Nygma has a neat outfit (very akin to the Riddler). Boy! He ain't good. Skayde

is capturing my heart with his scrawny spunkiness and all-around dynamic offense. Salsero has comical pants and a big fluffy shirt. WOO-HOO!

Shu El Guerrero/Juventud Guerrera/Psicosis vs Tarzan Boy/Angel Azteca/Super Elektra: This is very bad. Juventud botches a rolling guillotine and kills Super Elektra by nailing him in the face. The rest is a big bowl of nothing. Disappointing considering who is involved.

Hermanos Dynamitas vs El Zorro/LaParka/Vampiro: Hermanos Dynamitas=BAD! VERY BAD! No real wrestling is involved in this match. BAD! VERY BAD!

^%^%^%^ WRESTLE ASSOCIATION "R" TV 12/13/96 Tokyo 2 hrs

Ya just GOTTA love WAR. It's insane! It's just thrown together all willy nilly! ANYBODY and I mean ANYBODY can show up and start grappling! You can halfway expect Pistol Pez Whatley to show up and wrestle Tatsumi Fujinami and not blink an eye. This is basically the same deal. I tried to figure out the underlying theme to get this menagerie of wrestlers together and it beats my pair of Jacks. At least some of the matches are pretty good. And the bad matches are WAY to awful to be boring. There you have it.

Takashi Ishikawa/Daikokubo Benkei vs Jun Kikuchi/Tomohiro Ishii: This is over in two minutes as Ishikawa puts a very bad Dragon Sleeper on one of these anonymous WAR heavyweights. He yells for Tenryu a whole bunch at the end, I guess to tell him that he's sorry but they forgot to do anything in the match. Fill in your own angle. OR DON'T! THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF WAR! IT'S ALWAYS TOTALLY UP TO YOU!

Kamikaze/Masakazu Fukui vs Toryu/Takashi Okamura: I really dug this match because, SURE! they all suck, but they tried cool things and botched them completely- which is better than perfectly executing things that would bore the living hell out of me. Kamikaze and Fukui are the seediest tagteam in Japan and GOD! they ain't good. Okamura looks like he could be good at some point down the line. Toryu would be MUCH FARTHER down the line. Ohio or somewhere.

Battle Ranger/Doink vs Keisuke Yamada/Keizo Matsuda: One these poor saps had to put Doink over. Welcome to WAR IS HELL! Battle Ranger is still good. Doink! Doink! THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF WAR! YOU NEVER KNOW WHO'S GONNA BE THERE! DOINK! Whoda THOUGHT! NOT ME!

Ryuma Go vs Samurai Max: I've seen this match on one of those FMW doubleHELLWrestlemaniaDOME things and I remember thinking to myself, "God, Dean, This sucks real bad." This was better, but still sucks real bad. Ryuma Go is real old. Samurai Max is all out of excuses, though.

Tatsuo Nakano vs Satoshi Yoneyama: Sure! Why not. Nakano- the Freddy Fender-esque Fat Elvis of Shootstyle- has a little match with Yoneyama. They both look baffled about being on a

WAR card and they both wonder where their careers are going ("What is next for me? BENKEI?!? JOHN TENTA?!?"). Nakano with an ankle thingy.

Bam Bam Bigelow/Nobukazu Hirai vs Arashi/Osamu Tachihikari: This was weird. Hirai is the WORST. Bigelow is feeling it- being unafraid to wrestle anywhere under any circumstances. Arashi tags in and hits two actual wrestling moves- a Misawa-style Love Machine Splash, and a LigerBomb, and then is not heard from again. Tachihikari carried the rest of the match which basically consists of beating the shit out of the truly awful Hirai- which we can all get behind- and selling to the pumped and primed Bigelow. All the WAR native homegrown heavyweights exude the charm and appeal of the front row of the ECW arena (tee-hee!). Dateless, they turn their energies to wrestling with similar results. Bam Bam with a FAT ASS Moonsault.

Kazuo Yamazaki/Takayuki Iizuka vs Tatsumi Kitahara/Nobutaka Araya: This was good. The story is that Yamazaki is kicking the crap outta Araya (hey, it's Araya. Why not?) and Kitahara doesn't like it. Iizuka goes total pro-style as a counterpoint to the kicking that goes on. Kitahara is the best WAR heavyweight, because, dateless, he has turned his energies to kicking the fuck out of pretty boys like Yamazaki. Kitahara, knowing that when he does know the tender charms of women, they are closing their eyes and pretending that they are being loved on by Shinya Hashimoto, can fly into a gargantuan rage when in the ring which makes him the WAR heavyweight most fun to watch. Yamazaki, confident in his place in the world of ladies, turns his energy to kicking the hell out of anyone stupid enough to come near him. This is great. They go at it and I dig it the most, each kicking the lungs out of the other. Iizuka keeps up the Araya-stomping, while the shootstyle boys kick themselves out, and Iizuka pastes Araya-boy with two whomp ass blizzard suplexes. This was choice!

Lance Storm/Yuji Yasuraoka vs Tiger Mask(Sayama)/Masaaki Mochizuki (WAR INTL Jr Tag Title): This is really great! I love Lance Storm, but the best thing is that Yasuraoka still had the horrible hairstyle in this baby. Sayama doesn't come in much and Mochizuki concretizes his position as best worker to have never won a match. Yuji hits all his cool flying highspots. Mochizuki hits all his springboard spinning kicks and stuff that makes him neat. Lance kinda sits this one out when it comes to big highspots, pretty much leaving the match for Yuji and Mochizuki. Sayama doesn't get in the way. GET ALL THIS!

Ultimo Dragon vs Rey Misterio Jr. (J CROWN Title): I've reviewed this before and IT STILL KICKS ASS! I had forgotten the extended brainbuster by UD.

Koji Kitao vs John Tenta: WOW! THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF WAR! There's quite a history between these two- the shoot comments after the match way back when, they were both sumo's or something, they don't like each other, there is legit heat in the back, they get these cats together to pop a big house, Tenta is fired up, Kitao is fired up.... AH! Yeah, this was a gigantic wad of crap. It was worse than Kitao vs Mabel because Tenta never had the decency to put Kevin Nash and the Undertaker out of action for a couple of weeks like Mabel did. Kitao is the worst. WOO-HOO! And its right next to the main event, too. WAR, BABY!

Tenryu vs Nobuhiko Takada: Takada is real fast and the best ever for a time. Tenryu isn't and wasn't. HEY! It's over in ten minutes, at least. Try not to think about it, you could go crazy.

TOMORROW: Whatever I can get my mitts on! Liger! Liger! Liger!

NANIWA~!

Dean Rasmussen, basking in the shiny glow of Sugar SATO's title reig